



NORTH DAKOTA
DEPARTMENT *of* HEALTH

NEWS RELEASE

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Department of Health Offers Fireworks Safety Tips

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Health is reminding people celebrating the Fourth of July to take precautions to avoid fireworks-related injuries, according to Diana Read, Injury Prevention Program director for the Department of Health.

Fireworks can cause injuries such as blindness, cuts and third-degree burns. The most common types of fireworks-related injuries involve hands, fingers, eyes, and the head and face. Firecrackers are the type of fireworks most commonly associated with injuries, followed by sparklers and rockets.

According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, 11 people died and about 9,200 were treated in emergency departments for fireworks-related injuries in the United States in 2006. More than half of the injuries were burns, and one out of every three people injured were children younger than 15.

“Children should never play with or ignite fireworks and should always be supervised around others involved in fireworks displays,” Read said. “The safest way to prevent fireworks-related injuries is to leave the work to trained professionals. If you do choose to set off fireworks, it is important to do so safely.”

The Department of Health offers the following safety tips for handling fireworks:

- Read and follow all warnings and instructions.
- Be sure other people are out of range before lighting fireworks.
- Light fireworks only on a smooth, flat surface away from the house, dry leaves and flammable materials.
- Never try to relight fireworks that have not fully functioned.
- Keep a bucket of water handy in case of a malfunction or fire.

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“While the Fourth of July is a time for family gatherings and excitement, adult supervision is essential in keeping children safe during this holiday and all year long,” Read said. “Taking care to follow a few simple safety tips and keeping children at a safe distance from fireworks can help make this an enjoyable holiday for everyone.”

For more information about fireworks safety, contact Diana Read, North Dakota Department of Health, at 701.328.4537.

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